

ATTENDING AGENCIES/ORGANIZATIONS

1. City of Los Altos
2. City of San Jose
3. City of Mountain View
4. Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society
5. County of Santa Clara
6. Red Cross
7. Santa Clara Valley Water District
8. City of Redwood
9. USGS
10. California Coastal Conservancy
11. Baker Corp
12. Santa Clara County Open Space Authority
13. Balance Hydrologics
14. City of Gilroy
15. County of Santa Cruz
16. HDR
17. AECOM

SUMMARY

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) and United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) invited area agency and stakeholder contacts to attend a briefing that highlighted the findings of the public review draft of *California's Flood Future: Recommendations for Managing the State's Flood Risk*. The team again worked with the Bay Area Flood Protection Agencies Association to distribute the meeting information and arrange logistics.

DWR's Terri Wegener and USACE's Craig Conner lead the approximately 50-minute San Jose presentation. A deeper discussion of each *California's Flood Future* recommendation followed.

Key meeting questions/suggestions Included:

- Need to standardize data and how it is used; improve accessibility of data
- Need to address inconsistencies in mapping at agency boundaries and requirements of different agencies
- Need to improve interaction and data sharing between departments/agencies responsible for flood studies and building permitting – share updated maps
- Need to build a training program for people to deliver a consistent message and be mindful of the word chosen in informing the public - Flood is natural process
- Curriculum material can be used by teachers to educate future community leaders; need to educate decision-makers
- There should be a focus on recovery after a flood event
- There is a need to think beyond just flood management agencies to organize and coordinate with agencies or entities responsible for roads, hospitals, utilities, etc.
- Beyond 100-and 500-year, a complimenting risk approach with different scenarios should be considered to help provide better understanding of consequences

RECOMMENDATIONS DISCUSSION

(Italics indicate ideas or phrases from meeting presenters)

Recommendation 1

Conduct regional flood risk assessments to better understand statewide flood risk.

- Limitations of metadata, level of information needs to be at a local resolution, providing a common database. Locally means at the county level, such as the Santa Clara Valley Water District
- People are using the same data in different ways. Need to standardize. Commentator stated that he works at a hospital downhill of an area that has lower standards. Need to use lessons learned after hurricane Sandy. Must be able to cross political boundaries.
- Need to address using different mapping on either side of county boundaries.
 - *FEMA defines 100-year and 500-year floodplain.*
- 500-year floodplain defined differently in incorporated/unincorporated areas that can have higher/significantly different flood rates
 - *FEMA mapping is sometimes inconsistent with floodplains breaking along political or institutional boundaries (especially true for 500-year maps).*
 - *Mapping drives flood insurance and floodplain development. We need to do a better job of linking technical work to convey messages about flood risk.*
- Risk Map program is often going over jurisdictions. Program is looking at watersheds and communities and working toward ultimately identifying and being able to identify challenges and sources from a regional perspective.
- Does mapping done for SFMP identify areas where they should not build? Identify these areas as a region is looking at flood issues, flood plain preservation, as well as flood benefit.
 - *The SFMP did not realign maps or identify specific areas that should be protected as the study was performed at a broader resolution. The report does identify the need for better alignment between land use planners, building permit issuers and floodplain managers.*

Recommendation 2

Increase public and policymaker awareness about flood risks to facilitate informed decisions.

- USACE was asked to partner better with FEMA after hurricane Katrina.
- Need to make sure there are consistent message between all agencies.
- A lot of info is available online. Difficult to decipher between good/not so good info.
 - *One good resource is www.WaterToolbox.org.*
 - *Need to get the word out in a very consistent way. This will be challenging. There are many tools out there. Need to learn from others because consequences are so high and because the message is complex. Message needs to be clear, accessible and understandable to all level of stakeholders and audiences.*

- *During times of limited funding, need to leverage everyone's resources.*
- Need to build a training program for people to deliver a consistent message.
 - *FEMA alignment with CRS program.*
- If you want to inform the public, need to be careful about the words you use. Share a more complete story. Flood is natural process. Nutrition for floodplains, etc. Not just about flooding.
 - *Recommendation is to use an Integrated Water Management Approach.*
- Tools that might help would be curriculum material that can be used by teachers and communities for future leaders of community.
- Yuba County has a water resource curriculum for K-12.

Recommendation 3

Increase support for flood emergency preparedness, response, and recovery programs to reduce flood impacts.

- Increase flood readiness funding and flood emergency plan development.
- Regular flood exercises.
- Improve data forecasting.
- What about a focus on recovery? Not focused on how long it lasts, and how to keep going so that money and resource support does not dwindle prematurely.
 - *Recovery is an integral part of flood emergency management.*
- Document lessons learned. How to recover from a major flood event.
- What is the highest priority in long list of systems that have shut down? What mechanism is in place to make those decisions to help recovery? And need to coordinate implementation of decisions once they are made.
- Communication is an important part of any recovery process. Good to share lessons with other agencies or organizations. Need to think beyond just flood management agencies to organize and coordinate with agencies or entities responsible for roads, hospitals, electricity, etc.

Recommendation 4

Encourage land use planning practices that reduce the consequences of flooding.

- *DWR recognizes land use planning decisions are the responsibilities of local agencies. Land use decisions need to be made with an understanding of potential consequences. Develop planning principles. Communicate flood risk. Alignment between planners and emergency managers is needed.*
- Land use planning education is needed, including at a college level.
- Land use planners and building officials need education on flood management.

- County uses 100-year flood events to design projects. Other jurisdictions use 25-year event or less. Need to get everyone on the same page. i.e. detention for example
- Issue goes back to the 'no build' zones. Incentivizing these types of ways of looking at flooding. Need to identify areas as suitable uses for places to flood.
- It is complicated to be able to tell someone they are restricted to build on their property. Need to tie to education for decision-makers.
- 2013 decision: Incentives approach is already there. Messaging about floodplain is very limited. How we package economic value i.e. CRS looking at community in lieu of individual risk.

Recommendation 5

Implement flood management from regional, systemwide, and statewide perspectives to provide multiple benefits.

- Develop common criteria that will rate higher using IRWM approach.
- Improve state and federal processes for prioritizing projects.
- Coordinate regional and local flood management decisions/planning.

Recommendation 6

Increase collaboration among public agencies to improve flood management planning, policies and investments.

- Regional working groups to work on permits/plans/implementations.
- Provide funding, grant, and in-kind credit programs.
- Prioritize flood management investments.
- Flood O&M requirements need to be discussed in a forum to help reduce risk and meet permit needs- locals need help from State to lead this effort.

Recommendation 7

Establish sufficient and stable funding mechanisms to reduce flood risk.

- Permitting requirements need to be looked in a way that will allow projects to move forward.
- As we move forward should we be targeting specific project owners, agriculture, and utilities for cost sharing.
- Did the report look at California setting up own NFIP program as we are a net giver to the federal program.

- We as a state are a contributor rather than as a receiver of funding from the Federal government. Is there a way to look at CA as a candidate to receive federal assistance.
- If you only do risk analysis for 100 and 500 or if you only look at consequence you will get stuck. Complimenting risk approach with different scenarios as a way to look and understand consequences should be considered. Scenarios help show weak spots in systems. Also using extreme events such as ARCSTORM can help make people understand consequences of flooding in state.

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